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Statement submitted by International Peace and Development Organization, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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Statement

The role of the International Peace and Development Organization in combating violence against women

The International Peace and Development Organization is a voluntary Organization concerned with peacebuilding and development in regions affected by emergency conditions. It provides relief, support and assistance, implements projects designed to propagate a culture of peace and renunciation of violence, and conducts socio-economic development programmes.

Legal status of the Organization

The International Peace and Development Organization is a voluntary Sudanese Organization with its head office in Khartoum. Since 1995 it has been registered with the Humanitarian Aid Commission. The Organization has a General Assembly which elects its Board of Directors to a three-year term of office. The Board, in turn, designates an Executive Board to perform executive functions. The Organization also has four branch offices in the states.

The Organization is a member of a number of networks operating in various domains, including women's issues, peace and development and AIDS. Its methodology is based on the partnership principle. As such, it has formed partnerships with a number of local and international organizations and with the United Nations, having acquired consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in 2009.

Aims of the Organization

(1) Promotion of peacebuilding;

(2) Support for the causes and rights of women and children;

(3) Action to strengthen social peace and resolve conflicts;

(4) Disaster prevention and emergency response.

Vision

Assurance of the dignity and welfare of families, women and children in communities affected by emergency conditions in the Sudan and effective participation in building an enduring peace and achieving sustainable development.

Mission

The mission of the International Peace and Development Organization is to pursue a strategy to empower women – who constitute a pillar of peace and development in the target communities – by improving conditions for the protection and survival of women and children and by acting with professionalism to reduce the burden of poverty in target regions and communities in general.

Examples of the Organization's activities to ameliorate the conditions of women in areas of armed conflict

Emergency aid: The International Peace and Development Organization provides emergency aid, including food and other items, to women and children in conflict regions.

Essential services: The Organization also provides essential services – such as education, health and water – to women who have been displaced by armed conflicts. It provides these services in nearby safe areas to reduce the risk of women being exposed to violence.

Psychological treatment: The Organization provides psychological treatment to women suffering from the psychological effects of wars and armed conflicts.

Capacity building: The Organization builds the capacities of women by providing training to strengthen women politically, developing their conflict resolution, negotiating and mediation skills and instilling respect for diversity and coexistence to enable women to play robust roles in preventing and resolving conflicts through their presence at all levels of decision-making.

Awareness raising: The Organization provides activities to raise awareness of the dangers of armed conflicts and appeals for reconciliation, tolerance and acceptance of others. To this end, the organization holds many training sessions, using drama, music and sport as effective means of conveying the message of peace and renunciation of violence.

Addressing the critical economic conditions of women in conflict zones: Many activities are being undertaken to help women hone their skills and acquire new skills to earn a livelihood and gain access to micro-financing institutions. The Organization guarantees financing provided to poor women by the Bank of Sudan and commercial banks. Without such guarantees, the women would not be able to obtain financing.

Advocating for peace: The organization works with other organizations to pressure the decision-makers of parties to conflicts to stop fighting and accept calls for dialogue. It does so through statements, appeals and reports that clarify the suffering of victims.

Challenges

The greatest challenge is the persistence of decades-long unresolved armed conflicts that perpetuate suffering for women in areas of armed conflict.

In addition, Sudan has been subjected to unilateral sanctions for long periods. The accumulation of external debts and debt interest has made it difficult to address poverty, which could spawn new conflicts.

Recommendations

Dialogue rejectionists should be pressured to sit down at the dialogue table and work to end the armed conflict.

The causes of conflict – namely poverty, lack of development and the unilateral sanctions on Sudan – should be addressed in order to end the suffering of women in areas of conflict. Moreover, Sudan's external debts should be cancelled to ease the economic burdens on women.